

Annual report

Sexually Transmitted Infections Annual report January–December 2005

R F Miller, H Ward

We took over as editors three years ago. During that time, work for the journal has become increasingly busy and rewarding. As editors we are pleased to report that over the past year *Sexually Transmitted Infections* has continued to flourish as a high quality specialty journal.^{1,2}

A major highlight of the last year has been the increase in the journal's impact factor from 1.732 in 2003 to 2.204 in 2004 (table 1). The impact factor published in 2005 is based on the number of citations in 2004 divided by the number of original papers and reviews published in *Sexually Transmitted Infections* in 2002 and 2003. *Sexually Transmitted Infections* is now the highest ranked specialist journal in this field in terms of impact factor, and for the first time is ahead of *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*.

The number of articles published (excluding editorials and letters) has remained relatively constant over recent years, thus the improvement in impact factor reflects the increase in number of citations, a direct result of the high quality of papers submitted to the journal and of the peer review process.

In 2005 there were 403 submissions to the journal. This compares with 387 in 2003 and 444 submissions in 2004 (the number for 2004 was augmented by submissions directed specifically to the Men's Sexual Health issue). The number of papers submitted from the UK, Europe (excluding UK) and Japan has remained relatively constant, while during the last three years we have seen an increase in papers from North America

and Australasia. Our acceptance rate for original research papers is now 32.8%, which has fallen from 54.5% in 2003 and 50.6% in 2004. As the acceptance rate has decreased, the time from submission to first decision on all papers has fallen from an average of 35.9 days in 2004 to 27.8 days in 2005. This is a direct result of the efforts of our Assistant Editor (David Lewis), the Associate Editors and our reviewers. We are grateful to the many reviewers who have given up their valuable time to assess papers for *Sexually Transmitted Infections* and by doing so have contributed to the success of the journal. A full list of reviewers for 2005 is available on the Sexually Transmitted Infections website (www.stijournal.com/misc/reviewers.shtml). We would also like to thank the Editorial Board for their support of the journal.

The *Sexually Transmitted Infections* website (www.stijournal.com) remains very popular and the 10 most frequently read articles online over the last year had a total of 50 464 hits either as full text, PDF versions, or abstracts.^{3–12} This is an increase of 41.7% compared with 2004 (35 606 hits).

There are several specialty journals available to readers and to authors (table 1). The editors of *Sexually Transmitted Infections* have established a collaborative dialogue with the editor of *The International Journal of STDs and AIDS* which has allowed discussion of areas of mutual interest as well as clarifying terms of reference.

Janet O'Flaherty, the Managing Editor of *Sexually Transmitted Infections*, Michelle Dimler, our Editorial Assistant, and Melissa Dodd and Glen Hughes, the Technical Editors have all helped us produce a superb journal in 2005. Our thanks go to them. We also thank Angela Robinson, President of the British Association of Sexual Health and HIV for her support of the journal.

In 2006 we will introduce an important innovation – Online First. This will mean that original articles are posted on the *Sexually Transmitted Infections* website soon after acceptance, before technical editing and before publishing in the

print version of the journal. Our publication lag for the print journal is currently just over six months and we are keenly aware that authors of research papers want their articles cited as soon as possible after acceptance so that their results may influence other research and inform policy. Helen Ward (Editor) and Sevgi Aral (Associate Editor) will be editing a special themed issue on Sex Workers – which will be published in autumn 2006.

It has been a busy and successful year for the journal. The high submission rate of good quality papers throughout 2005 ensures that we will be able to publish articles of a high standard throughout 2006 and continue to build on the success achieved with *Sexually Transmitted Infections*.

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Authors' affiliations

R F Miller, H Ward, Sexually Transmitted Infections Editorial Office, BMA House, London, UK

Correspondence to: Dr R F Miller, Sexually Transmitted Infections Editorial Office, BMJ Journals, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9HR, UK; rmiller@gum.ucl.ac.uk

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Table 1 Specialty journal impact factors for 2004 (published in 2005)

Journal	Impact factor
<i>Sexually Transmitted Infections</i>	2.204
<i>Sexually Transmitted Diseases</i>	2.081
<i>International Journal of STD & AIDS</i>	1.506